

Job description

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| Job title: | Housing First Peer Mentor |
| Salary: | £15,816-£16,402 |

About the role

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Housing First Pilot is committed to developing, setting up and promoting Peer Mentor opportunities. This job role is available to anybody who has lived experience of rough sleeping and/or homelessness alongside other multiple and complex needs

The Housing First Peer Mentor is supported by a Housing First Navigator to provide person centred coaching, housing related support, information and advice to customers of the WMCA Housing First pilot.

The Housing First Peer Mentor alongside the Housing First Navigator works with a small group of Housing First customers. The anticipated staff-to-customer ratio is one staff member to six customers although this may vary through the life of the pilot.

Customers of Housing First will be single people or childless couples who are rough sleeping, homeless or at imminent risk of rough sleeping; they may present as challenging and difficult, and are likely to have multiple and complex needs which make finding, securing and maintaining accommodation impossible or extremely difficult.

Staff will work to engage customers who have a history of disengaging from services, using a variety of techniques and approaches to build a relationship and develop a support plan. Staff will meet the customer's needs first in supporting them to reach their personalised goals, make informed decisions, and achieve a greater level of stability and independence.

All activity will be underpinned by the Housing First principles: -

1. People have a right to a home
2. Flexible support is provided as long as it is needed
3. Housing and support are separated
4. Individuals have choice and control
5. The service is based upon people's strengths, goals and aspirations
6. An active engagement approach is used
7. A harm reduction approach is used

Staff are expected to work flexible hours in line with the needs of the customers. Therefore, work will be required outside of the conventional working week.

As a Peer Mentor you will be expected to:

- Develop skills in housing advice and giving information and tailored support, with a focus on individuals who are rough sleeping, homeless or at risk of rough sleeping with multiple needs.
- Develop an understanding of Housing First and its key principles.
- To build a relationship of trust with customers and to understand the importance of empowering them.
- Assist customers to be able to achieve their personalised support outcomes.
- Work as part of a multi-disciplinary team to deliver a high standard of support to individuals within the Housing First pilot.
- Be prepared to contribute own experiences to identify barriers and gaps in services, how they could be improved and to identify good practice.
- Attend and identify appropriate training and development opportunities as required.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Develop and maintain positive and professional relationships with customers.
- Work alongside Housing First Navigators to assess customer's needs and implement individual personalised support plans.
- Deliver support informed by core Housing First principles to assist customers in achieving personalised outcomes.
- Alongside Housing First Navigators, take responsibility for Health and Safety issues that may arise including carrying out needs and risk assessments with each customer.
- Adopt a Psychologically Informed approach to supporting and coaching customers, including use of learning from Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) training and reflective practice.
- Provide emotional and practical support and advice to customers to promote wellbeing and choice, encouraging them to make decision about their future.
- Maintain regular contact with customers including visits to customer's homes and appropriate community settings, accompanying them to other services and external appointments.
- Respond appropriately to chaotic and challenging behaviour to safeguard the wellbeing of customers and staff.
- Alongside Housing First Navigators, liaise with accommodation providers and actively encourage customers to move into appropriate Housing First accommodation of their choice.
- Alongside Housing First Navigators, identify barriers of accommodation and managing tenancies and provide support including practical help with furniture,

benefits advice and budgeting.

- To offer advice, guidance and support on ways in which substance misuse and other harmful activities can be practiced more safely.
- Advocate for customers to access all services to meet their needs, including reconciliation work with agencies if required.
- With customer agreement, liaise with external agencies as required including Substance Misuse and Recovery, Offending and Criminal Justice, Health and Mental Health, Domestic Abuse, Welfare and Housing Benefits, Debt, Child and Adult Protection, Employment and Training.
- Encourage and support customers to participate in meaningful activities e.g. social, recreational, sport, faith, learning, arts.
- To keep accurate records of work undertaken including case files.

Key Outcomes

1. Customers have and maintain a home of their own
2. Customers have every opportunity to identify and achieve their goals and aspirations
3. Access to rights and help is maximised, including financial, health, social, occupation
4. Harm is reduced, including through reduction in – rough sleeping, homelessness, poor mental health, substance misuse, criminal behaviour, and anti-social behaviour.

[INSERT Organisation specific requirements] e.g.

- Provide temporary cover for colleagues as required.
- If required, participate in a rota of duties, to ensure that service delivery is available in the evenings, at weekends and on bank holidays.
- Ensure that administrative policies, specifically those on equal opportunities, confidentiality and data protection, are followed.

Person Specification

| | Essential | Desirable |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Knowledge and Experience: | | |
| 1. Lived experience of rough sleeping or homelessness alongside other multiple and complex needs e.g. mental health, substance misuse, offending or other. | √ | |
| 2. Experience of achieving goals that you have set for yourself in relation to housing and multiple needs and having achieved a level of stability. | √ | |
| 3. An interest in a career working to support vulnerable adults who are experiencing rough sleeping or homelessness and are likely to have multiple and complex needs. | √ | |
| 4. Knowledge of benefits system | | √ |
| 5. Commitment to working within confidentiality and safeguarding frameworks | √ | |
| Skills: | | |
| 6. Customer focussed, providing support to achieve a positive outcome | √ | |
| 7. Ability to build good relationships with others including agencies, teams and individuals | √ | |
| 8. Ability to influence and persuade others to implement change | √ | |
| 9. Good communication skills e.g. written, verbal and listening skills directly with services and customers | √ | |
| 10. Ability to apply and share expert knowledge and experiences with others | √ | |
| 11. Enthusiastic with a positive and solution-focused attitude | √ | |
| 12. Ability to listen and take into account different opinions | √ | |
| 13. Basic computer skills, including word processing, internet and email alongside a desire to learn new skills | √ | |